Command Historical Sketch

Naval Hospital Corpus Christi, Texas leading up to where we are today . . .

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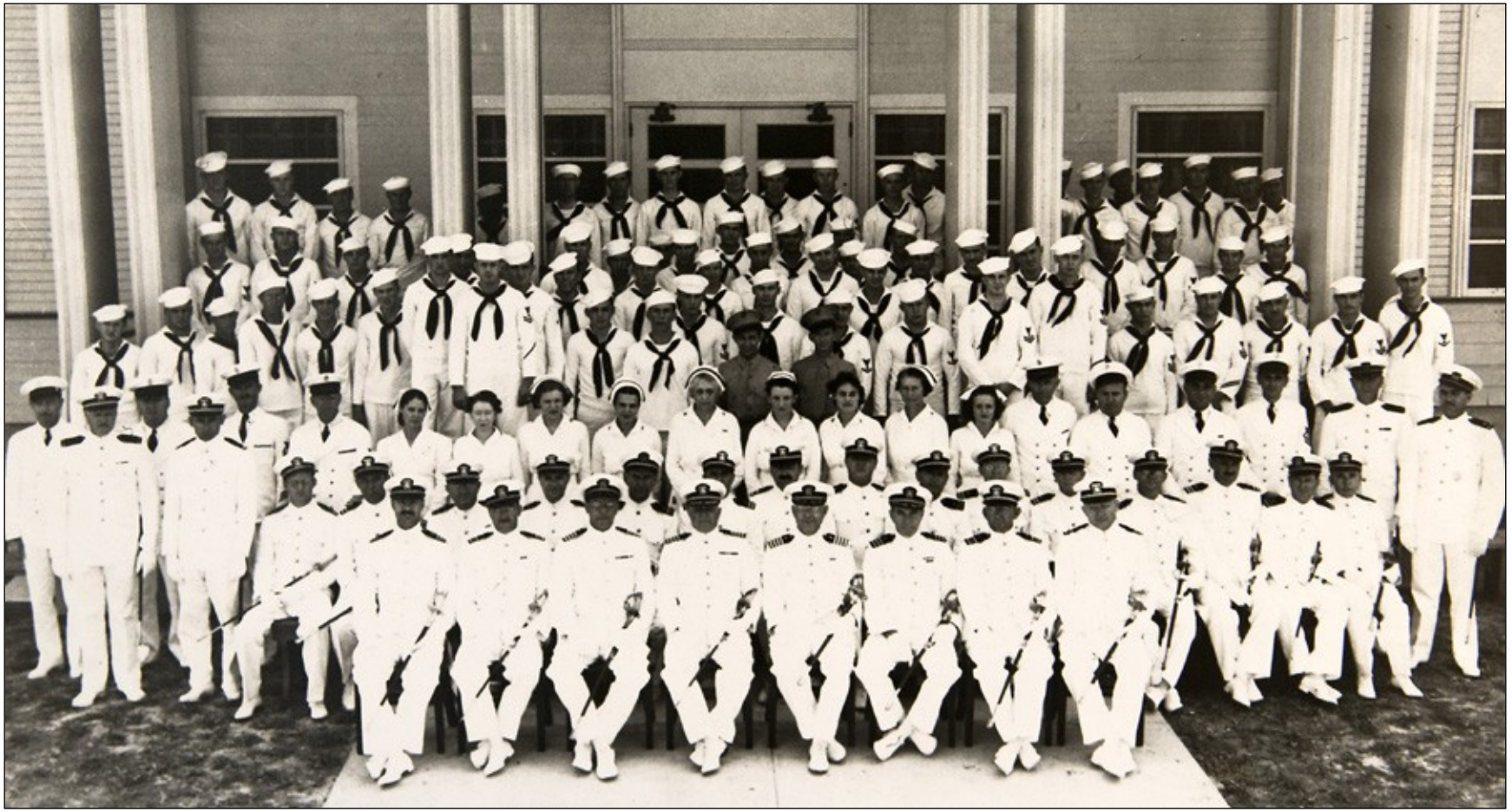
Commissioning Crew



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Original Hospital Complex

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Architect's Rendition

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Groundbreaking

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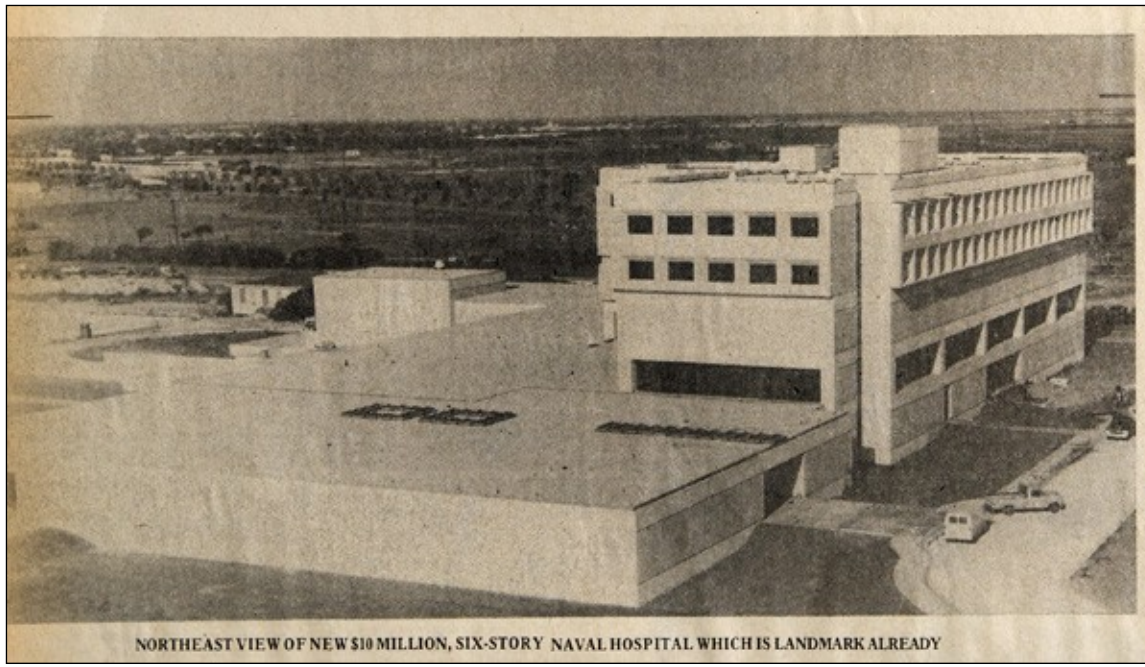
Ready Within Weeks



NORTHEAST VIEW OF NEW $10 MILLION, SIX-STORY NAVAL HOSPITAL WHICH IS LANDMARK ALREADY

Corpus Christi Caller

NEWS AND EDITORIALS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 1974 SECTION B

EDITORIALS: 2-3

Naval Hospital will be ready within weeks

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New Gleaming Structure

All medical, dental facilities will be consolidated in new gleaming structure

By SPENCER PEARSON
Staff Writer

Years of hopes, plans and construction are about to reach fruition as the new $10 million Naval Hospital nears completion.

The gleaming - white, six - story structure, already a landmark at Naval Air Station, is due for completion in the next few weeks, with a dedication planned about March.

Navy doctors, nurses, corpsmen and civilians are counting the days when they can move into the all - modern building from the old and, in some cases, dilapidated buildings erected nearly 33 years ago as a temporary hospital.

The new building will house all medical and dental facilities of the present hospital, plus those of the air station, which have been for years located in dozens of wood - frame structures scattered over an 86 - acre tract. The original hospital, opened July 1, 1941, occupied 67 buildings and structures.

Navy Medical Corps officials worked for years to get a new hospital. Approval finally came in 1968. Construction began in the spring of 1971. It was originally due for completion in the spring of 1973, but a labor strike and bad weather brought about delays adding up to nearly a year.

It has been so long since Welton Beckett & Associates, Houston architectural firm, began designing the building, that some equipment became outdated, and the latest equipment was ordered to replace it.

Burnett Construction Co., now a subsidiary of the Tanca Corp., got the construction contract on a bid of $9,326,000. Change orders and new equipment have increased the cost to about $9.7 million.

Another $1.3 million has been spent for furnishings, such as beds, office furniture and other items not included in the construction contract.

Hospital personnel began moving some furniture into the new hospital last week, but it will be six to eight weeks before patients can be moved in. A general cleanup must be conducted after all furniture is moved in. Following this will be stocking the building with supplies. The final job will be moving the patients and all hospital records from the old buildings.

Although the move has begun, the building still must be accepted officially by the Navy from the contractor.

Hospital officials indicate there is no question that the building will be accepted post haste.

Asked what had been left out or what mistakes had been made in the construction job, Capt. Robert R. Hughes, administrative officer, replied: "Nothing."

"It is one of the most dramatic changes in medical care the Navy has seen in years," said Capt. James E. Turner Jr., hospital commander.

"It will be a completely modernized operation," he said. "All of the equipment is of the latest design." He said Beckett began designing the hospital about seven years ago. Because of the time lag between that and finished construction, research was done to be sure the latest equipment was installed and to avoid "built - in obsolescence."

He said the old open - bay wards have been eliminated in favor of hospital rooms for one, two and four patients.

The hospital has the most modern patient - nurse communication system, he said. "The nurse will never be out of contact with the patient."

"It's more in the line of a civilian hospital," the doctor said, "but its basic design provides for treatmc. of more people with better efficiency."

The main floor of the hospital is basically an outpatient clinic. Also on that floor is the aviation physiology department, which includes a large decompression chamber.

The hospital administration is located on the second floor.

On the third floor are six operating suites, intensive care unit, obstetrics ward and nursery.

Patient rooms are on the fourth and fifth floors.

The basement contains the galley, a cafeteria, barbershop, central sterilization, laundry, and supply departments and a morgue.

A sub-basement contains mechanical equipment, including a 500 kilowatt generator connected to emergency circuits. In case the regular power goes out, the emergency generator can pick up the load in five seconds, Lt. Cmdr. D. H. Gerdel, officer in charge of construction, explained.

The patient rooms are quite different from the old-style open-bay wards where perhaps as many as 20 patients may be kept. There are one-, two- and four-patient rooms in the new hospital, and retractable curtains can be pulled to separate beds for privacy.

At the head of each bed is a panel with communication, oxygen and suction connections.

The hospital will have 106 color television sets for patients, one for each single room, one for each double room, and two for each four-bed room, and all with remote controls connected to the beds.

Here are some other features of the new hospital:

—The intensive care unit has a special cardiac monitoring system which will allow the nurse on duty to keep a constant check on each patient.

—The hospital has central oxygen and suction systems with connections throughout the building — in operating suites, in the intensive care unit and in each patient room. The suction system even has inlets in each room and along the halls for vacuum cleaning.

—Stainless steel kitchen equipment with both electrical and gas connections.

—Trash and linen disposal systems connected to all floors.

—Dumb waiters to all floors for quick deliveries of medicines and foods.

—Cart and tray cleaning system to reduce contamination possibilities.

—Special facilities for pediatric patients.

—Two libraries, a general library for patients and a technical one for the staff.

—A chapel and office for the chaplain.

—Color codes on all floors to help visitors and patients find their way around the building.

—Separate thermostatic controls for each room.

—A paging system with a 12-mile voice range for contacting doctors.

The hospital has about 240 personnel, including 31 medical officers, 60 Navy and civilian nurses, 120 hospital corpsmen, seven dentists, two pharmacists, one optometrist, one physical therapist, one laboratory officer, 12 administrative officers, three aviation physiologists and one preventive medicine officer.

Inspecting stainless steel equipment in galley of new Naval Hospital are (left to right) Capt. James E. Turner Jr., hospital commander; Joe Fulton, president of Tanca Corp.; Lt. Cmdr. D. H. Gerdel, officer in charge of construction, at Cmdr. A. F. Shedlosky, hospital liaison officer for construction.

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Dedication Invitation

The Commanding Officer
Naval Hospital
Corpus Christi, Texas
requests the honor of your presence
at the dedication of
the new
hospital building
Saturday, the twenty-third of March
Nineteen hundred and Seventy-Four
at ten o'clock

R.S.V.P.
939-2685

Uniform
Tropical White Long

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Dedication Ceremony

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New Facility

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Renaming Ceremony

Captain Robert B. Sorenson, Medical Corps, United States Navy
Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital Corpus Christi
requests the pleasure of your company
at which
Naval Hospital Corpus Christi
will be officially renamed
to
Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christi
at ten o'clock in the morning
on Thursday, the fourteenth of February
Two thousand eight
in front of Naval Hospital Corpus Christi

R.S.V.P.
Card enclosed
(361) 961-2685
Deane.Mcnabb@med.navy.mil

Participant: Service Dress Blues
Military: Uniform of the Day
Civilian: Appropriate attire

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Naval Health Clinic CC

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